

Experiences Related to Sensory Integration Disabilities

This information was reported to Monroe Products and The Monroe Institute by individuals and/or by professional practitioners about the use of Hemi-Sync® in the late 1990s.

Since 1981 I have been using *Hemi-Sync* with young children who experience sensory motor and sensory integrative disabilities. Both clinical experience and preliminary research indicate that the addition of *Hemi-Sync* signals (containing frequencies which produce more theta patterns in the brain) to background music increases the child's focus of attention, calms the emotions, and creates a mental set of open receptivity. *Hemi-Sync* is an excellent example of the sensory integrative process of the brain. Two independent auditory signals are integrated in a way that produces a whole (i.e., *Hemi-Sync*) which is different from each of the separate parts. Initial processing and integration occur in the brain stem. In addition, the tendency toward synchronization of the right and left hemispheres appears to enhance attention, sensory and extrasensory awareness, and intuitive processing, and to increase successful adaptation to personal experiences.

However, an unexpected response was seen in children who, prior to *Hemi-Sync* therapy, experienced severe difficulties with sensory organization and integration. These children showed major difficulties accepting touch to their bodies. Gentle hugs, light calming strokes or pats, or accidental touching usually elicited strong aversive reactions. The child would push the touching person away, screech or cry, hit the person, or withdraw and begin a series of stereotyped self-stimulatory behaviors. They did not like to get their hands messy, have their hair washed or combed, or sit outside in the wind and grass. Many of the children became frightened and disoriented with movement or changes of position. They tended to increase these behaviors in complex sensory environments. A busy household, a school classroom or cafeteria, or a trip to the grocery store would reduce the child's ability to function and would increase the frequency and strength of the behaviors used to cope. Because of the intensity of their reactions to their environment, most of these children were labeled autistic, profoundly retarded, or emotionally disturbed.

When *Hemi-Sync* was added to therapy and classroom environments, these children responded in a totally different way. Eye contact increased. They accepted touch and became curious and interested in the sensory input. They were no longer startling and putting their hands over their ears to sounds that were previously upsetting. The amount of frustrated screeching and crying was reduced, and more functional communication emerged. There was a reduction in behaviors previously used by the child to cope with sensory overload. The children stopped rocking, spinning, and flapping and began to pay attention.

It appeared that the *Hemi-Sync* signals enhanced the child's ability to organize and integrate sensory information. This resulted in an increase in the ability to focus attention, to discriminate specific sensory properties, and to filter unwanted sensory input. What were these children telling us about the use of *Hemi-Sync* in our own lives?

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